

VIRGINIA ENHANCED OPERATORS QUALIFICATIONS UPDATE 2014

Industry Issues



Non-existing tasks (tasks not included in OQ)

Failure to identify and react properly to Abnormal Operating Conditions

Insufficient detail in some procedures

Weaknesses in some OQ training and Evaluations

New Technologies coming into play

Development of new and or improved Best Practices

Collaborative Work



- **VGOA Executive Committee formed in 2011**
 - **VA SCC began discussions regarding OQ**
- **SCC reviewed existing plans, training and testing materials and shared their concerns with the VGOA Executives**
- **After discussions, it was agreed that the existing OQ programs needed to be improved**

Where to Start



Evaluate current training

Evaluate current process for demonstrating knowledge, skills, and ability

Draft new, comprehensive training materials, knowledge and skills assessments

Develop implementation processes

Develop monitoring and progress tracking systems

Building the Beast



- It was decided to partner with a third party vendor
- Use their OQ model as a foundation on which to build the Virginia Enhanced Operators Qualifications
- Protocols and guidelines were established to address any potential conflicts or other issues
- SME Teams were scheduled to work on specific tasks

SME Process (5 steps)



Evaluation development

Validation

Validation review

Online training development

Online training SME approval

Evaluation Development



SME's meet and develop task domains and elements, AOC's, task evaluations, and testing materials based on 192 and other applicable codes.

Utilize SME knowledge, companies procedures, GPTC guidelines, best practices, technologies and other resources being used

Focus on best way to determine a person is trained and knowledgeable about a specific task

Validation

During **In** a pipe insertion installation, **the purpose of** sealing the conduit openings is to prevent entry of which of the following? [delete blank line and change period to question mark]

- A. Natural gas
- B. **Water**
- C. Carbon monoxide
- D. **Bugs**

Note: Choice D is rather implausible. If Q82 is eliminated, consider taking “environmental contaminants” from its stem, using it as a second correct answer in place of current Choice D in Q83, and adding “Select ALL that apply” to the stem.

Note: The original stem implied that keeping out water is the sole reason for sealing, when clearly this is not so (per Q82). The revision to the stem corrects the flaw, but will not suffice if there are still other things (e.g., dirt) that sealing is designed to keep out. If so, the team should rephrase the item accordingly.

Technical Note: The meaning of “During” in the stem is ambiguous. It could mean “while the pipe is being inserted” or merely “in connection with a pipe insertion installation.” The suggested change from “During” to “In” reflects the latter meaning. The team should consider whether this is as intended, and more importantly, whether the intent would be even clearer if the stem were refined to suggest a point in time; for example: “Following installation of a gas service using the dead insertion method, the purpose of sealing ...”

Validation Review



Upon receiving Validation from Dr. Sherri, SME's schedule a meeting (usually a conference call) to discuss her comments and either agree or disagree to the changes

Notes are made for specific training considerations from the finalized evaluation

Online training development



Once the evaluation has been finalized it is sent to Industrial Training Services who develop the training along with any additional instructions

ITS then prepares a training story board and forwards it back to the SME members of that task

Online training Approval



SME members review the story board and make notes and prepare comments on any issues that they are concerned with

A conference call or webinar is set up to discuss these issues and solutions. ITS representatives are involved at these discussions

If changes are necessary they are made and when satisfied with the training module SME approves final training module

No person has been seriously injured or arrested as a result of any of the SME meetings!

Successes



Process has improved greatly in the last 9 months we are able to complete most task development activities in 3 days and sometimes multiple tasks

Good mix of people made up of Regulars, SCC Staff, and new SME's. This has ensured consistency with the development process and lessons learned, along with fresh eyes and ideas

Successes



**Gaining experience and confidence with the processes.
Better preparation for the meetings through prework
and homework has made things much more efficient**

**Webinars and conference calls have been valuable to
eliminate travel and address any unforeseen issues
that might arise**

Successes



Established rules by the Executive Team have helped the structure and flow of the process

Companies have identified opportunities to improve O&M's through the development process

Continued positive feed back from other regulatory agencies and operators

Challenges



Due to early struggles we have flooded the validation process and on line training development with tasks

Coordination of meetings, webinars, and conference calls are sometimes difficult as the Staff and SME's all have full time jobs and other responsibilities

Challenges

Size and structure of Utility has resulted in different evaluation needs. In some cases resulting in multiple types of tests and evaluations for one covered task

Where we are now!



53 tasks identified at present (that number will change)

Evaluation development: 31 tasks completed and 8 being worked on

Validation: 20 tasks completed and 11 are being worked on

Validation Review: 13 tasks completed and 7 to be worked on

Where we are now!



Online training development: 8 to be completed soon and 5 being worked into storyboards for review

Online training approval: 2 completed and in service. 8 to be coming out soon with 5 more waiting to follow